

Community Acceptance of Non-Market Housing

Purpose

The purpose of this Toolkit is to help non-profit housing providers, local governments and other stakeholder groups gain community acceptance of non-market housing developments, including projects that may face community resistance. This Toolkit addresses how and when to contact community members and how to work toward community support for a development.

What is Non-Market Housing?

Non-market housing covers housing along the housing spectrum, ranging from supportive housing for those experiencing homelessness to affordable rental housing and affordable home ownership. Please see page 2 for more information.

According to BC Housing and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) housing is considered affordable if it costs less than 30% of a household's before-tax income.

Community Acceptance of Non-Market Housing Toolkit

Introduction

Since the release of the B.C. Government's [Towards More Inclusive Neighbourhoods](#) toolkit in 1995, much has changed in the delivery of subsidized and other non-market housing across British Columbia. Community groups and residents are organizing and exchanging information in new ways, often through social media, where both information and misinformation can quickly spread. The provincial government is funding many types of housing along the housing spectrum; however, some face more resistance from community members than others. This updated toolkit aims to help organizations and non-profit housing providers respond to community resistance to ensure safe, secure and affordable housing is developed for those most in need.

Who Is This Toolkit For?

- › Non-profit providers that are sponsoring a housing development for the first time or that have not sponsored a housing development recently.
- › New members to local government councils and boards.
- › Community agencies looking for ideas to support the development of non-market housing.
- › Developers partnering with non-profit housing providers to create non-market housing.
- › Non-profit providers, local government staff and officials, development consultants, and other stakeholders who are experienced at sponsoring housing developments, but want to see case studies, lessons learned, templates and other resources to get new ideas.

Materials from a previously published toolkit are incorporated into this updated edition, with additional research and consultation with several stakeholder groups and recent literature and case studies. This introduction forms part of the Community Acceptance of Non-Market Housing Toolkit, a series of five guides. For more information on the Toolkit, go to the [Research Centre Library](#).

Non-market Housing

Non-market housing includes housing that is subsidized by government as well as non-profit housing that is below market.

Non-market housing covered in this guide includes:

› HOUSING WITH SUPPORT SERVICES

- **Supportive Housing Units:** Housing for people who are at risk of homelessness, or formerly homeless. This type of housing includes the provision of on- or off-site support services to help the clients move towards independence and self-sufficiency.
- **Special Needs:** Housing for people who need access to affordable housing with support services. These clients include adults with mental and/or physical disabilities or youth.
- **Supportive Housing for Seniors:** Housing for seniors who need access to housing with ongoing supports and services. Housing in this category is for those who cannot live independently.
- **Women and Children Fleeing Violence:** BC Housing provides funding for transition houses, safe homes and second stage housing programs that support women and their children who have experienced violence or are at risk of experiencing violence by providing temporary shelter/housing and support services.

› SOCIAL HOUSING

- **Low Income Families:** Housing for low to moderate income family households with a minimum of two people including at least one dependent child. Support services are not integrated into this housing; however, residents may arrange services privately.
- **Low Income Seniors:** Housing for low to moderate income senior households where minimal or no additional services are provided. Seniors are usually defined as individuals who are 65 years of age and older. Support services are not integrated into this housing; however, residents may arrange services privately.

Other emergency and non-market housing not covered by this guide include:

- › **ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS:** Includes year-round shelter spaces and rent supplements that help people transition from homelessness. These services provide both accommodation and supports to connect people to, and maintain, a stable housing tenancy.
- › **RENT ASSISTANCE IN THE PRIVATE MARKET**
 - **Rent Assistance Families:** Housing subsidy to provide eligible low-income families with cash assistance to help with their monthly rent payments in the private market. Housing under this category includes the Rental Assistance Program (RAP) as well as other rent supplement units in the private market targeted towards families.
 - The *Rental Assistance Program (RAP)* provides eligible low-income, working families with cash assistance to help with their monthly rent payments in the private market.
 - **Rent Assistance Seniors:** Housing subsidy to help make private market rents affordable for B.C. seniors with low to moderate incomes. Housing under this category includes the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program as well as other rent supplement units in the private market targeted towards seniors.
 - The *Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER)* program helps make rents affordable for BC seniors with low to moderate incomes. SAFER provides monthly cash payments to subsidize rents for eligible B.C. residents who are aged 60 or over and who pay rent for their homes.
- › **AFFORDABLE RENTAL:** Housing units within the private market that are geared towards supporting low-to-moderate income residents. These units would generally be priced at the low end of the market and may be part of a development that has additional social housing units on-site.
- › **OWNER PURCHASED HOMES:** Allows new prospective middle-income homeowners the benefits of long-term stable and affordable housing, and the opportunity to develop equity in their homes.



What is in this Toolkit?

This Toolkit provides five guides that cover different topics, including:

Guide 1

Building Partnerships with Local Government

This guide helps non-market housing stakeholders understand the various roles local governments have in the delivery of housing. It is intended to assist non-profit housing providers when working with local government in the development process. This guide also helps non-profit housing providers demonstrate community acceptance of proposed non-market housing to local governments.

Guide 2

Design Considerations to Gain Community Acceptance

Mitigating potential community concerns through the thoughtful inclusion of specific design elements is a vital part of gaining and maintaining community acceptance and creating more inclusive neighbourhoods. This guide can help non-profit housing providers avoid and address common design concerns raised by community members.

Guide 3

Gaining and Maintaining Community Acceptance

This guide provides tips for non-profit housing providers to prevent and address community opposition. It describes options to include in a community consultation plan and discusses how to effectively engage with both traditional media and social media as part of an engagement strategy.

Guide 4

Sample Materials for Non-profit Housing Providers

This guide offers sample materials that non-profit housing providers can refer to when engaging with local governments, neighbouring residents, and the public during delivery of a proposed development. This includes sample letters, community event planning materials, and a list of Frequently Asked Questions with suggested responses.

Guide 5

Additional Resources

This guide provides information and additional resources for non-market housing stakeholders, many of which are referenced throughout this Toolkit.

BC Housing is committed to working in partnership with Indigenous peoples to embrace and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC): Calls to Action. Indeed, one of the key organizational goals is to enhance Indigenous partnerships and relationships. When developing new housing, BC Housing is still learning about the specific ways to respectfully engage with Indigenous communities for input, understanding that different communities have unique protocols and needs.

For example, it is important that the development team know whose traditional territory the proposed project is on. In urban areas where there will be individuals from different First Nations communities, it might be useful to engage with local Indigenous community organizations to learn how best to support the needs of Indigenous peoples in the region.

We will be doing consultations and add a guide to the Toolkit that discusses engagement of Indigenous communities in the development of non-market housing.





How Was This Toolkit Developed?

This Toolkit was developed in collaboration with BC Housing's Research Centre and Dillon Consulting Limited using a variety of methods, including:

- › **One-on-one interviews** with representatives from four neighbourhood groups
- › **Focus groups** with four stakeholder groups: non-profit housing providers, local government representatives, community organizations, and Advisory Group members
- › **Case studies** from throughout the province
- › **Literature review** of relevant case studies and toolkits
- › **Meetings with BC Housing staff and Advisory Group members**

The information in this Toolkit relies on all the sources identified in this section. Where specific sections of other reports were quoted or copied with some slight adaptations, the original reports are cited. However, most components of this guide can be linked back to several pieces of literature, case studies, and primary consultation results, as well the original toolkit. Components of the Toolkit that are not specifically cited are pulled from a combination of these sources. Please see the bibliography on the next page for a listing of reports reviewed as part of the literature review to inform this Toolkit.

Throughout the Toolkit, relevant case studies and examples are provided. These were selected to demonstrate the range of approaches being used throughout B.C. to address community resistance and facilitate the development of non-market housing. They are not necessarily endorsed by BC Housing.

Who Helped Develop This Toolkit?

Non-profit housing providers

- Affordable Housing Advisory Association
- BC Society of Transition Houses
- Coast Mental Health
- Greater Victoria Housing Society
- Island Crisis Care Society
- Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society
- Metro Vancouver Housing
- MPA Society
- New Chelsea Society
- Our Place Society
- PHS Community Services Society
- RainCity Housing
- Salvation Army Maple Ridge
- Sanford Housing Society

Local Governments

- City of Kamloops
- City of Kelowna
- City of New Westminster
- City of Richmond
- City of Victoria
- District of North Vancouver
- District of West Vancouver
- Fraser Valley Regional District
- City of Vancouver

Community Organizations

- Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness
- Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness
- Pivot Legal Society
- Surrey Homelessness and Housing Taskforce
- Together Against Poverty Society
- United Way Central and Northern Island
- Vancity Impact Real Estate Division
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- YWCA Metro Vancouver

BC Housing would especially like to thank Advisory Group members on behalf of:

- BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- BC Non-Profit Housing Association
- Homelessness Services Association of BC
- Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation

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More Information:

BC Housing’s Research Centre works in collaboration with housing sector partners to foster excellence in residential construction and find innovative solutions for affordable housing in British Columbia. Sharing leading-edge research, advances in building science, and new technologies encourages best practice. The Research Centre identifies and bridges research gaps to address homelessness, housing affordability, social housing challenges and the needs of distinct populations. Mobilizing knowledge and research expertise helps improve the quality of housing and leads to innovation and adoption of new construction techniques, Building Code changes, and enhanced education and training programs. Learn more about the Research Centre at www.bchousing.org.

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To find more about building community acceptance, visit our website: www.bchousing.org